4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
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443 492 439 Like the *huacalero*, the *arriero* in the Tarascan area has functioned chiefly as a commercial intermediary between the *tierra caliente* and the *tierra fría*. During the colonial period, however, some mule skinners extended operations into the northern mining districts. Moreover, various mestizo towns in Tarasca became *arriero* centers—strategic points along the main routes where mule trains met, animals were sold and traded, supplies purchased, and merchandise exchanged. Such towns became residences of many muleteers. A series of these centers lies within the *tierra caliente* and includes Apatzingán, Huetamo, and Coyuca. Another series is located within the *tierra templada:* Uruapan, Ario, Tacámbaro. Other centers are found in the *tierra fría:* Cotija, and, formerly, Parangaricutiro and Jiquilpan. Most of these towns still function as *arriero* centers, and although motor transportation is continually replacing the mule and burro, some of them will continue to serve as way stations for fuel and repairs and collecting points for products carried out by trucks.

443 494 Since the construction of motor roads in many parts of Tarasca, former *arrieros* and *huacaleros* have begun to use public busses and semipublic trucks to transport merchandise. Pottery vendors, for example, stand for hours along the highway, hailing through-trucks to take them and their goods to Guadalajara, Morelia, or Mexico City. Moreover, heavy sugar and *cascalote* trucks now operate from Uruapan, Pátzcuaro, and Los Reyes into the *tierra caliente*.

442 The wholesale buyers represent a modern type of merchant, who with the advent of road construction have begun to penetrate into the Tarascan area. Grain dealers from Morelia, Zamora, and Uruapan now run their trucks into the Sierra towns to buy surplus wheat. Again, many woodworkers in Paracho are on contract to city wholesalers for turned work and guitars, which are collected at intervals in trucks or passenger cars.